Amendments to the Specification:

Please amend the following paragraph as indicated.

[0023] 96-well blocks (Qiagen, Hilden, Germany) with bacteria were centrifuged at 3000 g (Sigma centrifuges, Osterode am Harz, Germany) for 5 min. The supernatant was decanted and the blocks were inverted and put on absorbent paper towel for 2 to 3 min. Then 170 ml of buffer P1 (50 mM Tris-HCl/10 mM EDTA pH 8.0, 4°C) were added and the bacteria pellets were resuspended by complete vortex treatment for 10 to 20 min. After addition of 170 ml of buffer P2 (200 mM NaOH, 1% SDS), the block was sealed with foil, inverted and incubated at room temperature for 5 min. The lysis was stopped by adding 170 ml of 4°C cold buffer P3 (3 M potassium acetate pH 5.5, 4°C). Then 10 ml of RnaseA solution (1.7 mg/ml) were added, followed by incubation at room temperature and then at -20°C for 5 min and another centrifugation at 6000 rpm for 10 min. The supernatant was decanted into new blocks and 100 ml of buffer P4 (2.5% (w/v) SDS in isopropanol) were added. The block was subjected to vortexing for 5 min and incubated initially at 4°C for 15 min and then at 20°C for 15 min. The blocks were centrifuged at 6000 rpm for 10 min and the supernatant was ~~[lacuna]~~ transferred into an array of 96 columns (Qiagen) in appropriately cut 96-well plates~~, had been prepared~~. These plates were placed in vacuum chambers (Qiagen). Then 150 ml of silicon oxide suspension were added followed by incubation at room temperature for 20 min (the silicon oxide suspension was prepared by adding 150 ml of HCl (37%) to 250 ml of a suspension of 50 mg/ml SiO_2 (Sigma) and subsequent autoclaving).